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A procedure for the protection of computer software and/or computer-readable data against unauthorized use includes the encoding of the software by the licensor dependent on license parameters, the storage of the software at the licensee, the encoded transmission of the license parameters from the licensor to the licensee, and the automatic decoding of the software dependent on the stored license parameters during the use of the software by the licensee.

The encoding of the software is initialized dependent on a secret Firm Key (FK) freely selected by the licensor. The encoding of the transmission of license parameters occurs dependent on a secret Private Serial Key (SK). The decoding of the software or data is initialized dependent on the Firm Key (FK) selected by the licensor.

The procedure permits an especially secure copy protection and makes possible the storage of a large number of mutually independent license parameters of different licensors. Preferably use is made of a protective device (3) that is linked to the computer (2) of the licensee and includes a memory (6) with several memory areas (6a, 6b, 6c) for the storage of license parameters of different licensors.

(Figure 1)